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Subject: Background information on conservation of Rope and Twine.

Distribution: State War Board Members, information workers.

Suggested use: I. Extension editors: stories on how to conserve and use rope and twine.

II. All agencies with farmer contacts: Explain why shortages exist and need for care.

As with other farm production supplies, war has vitally affected supplies of hard fibers for making rope and twine. Agriculture has been a big user of these two supplies. Normally, farmers have purchased about one-third of the supply of hard fiber twine and rope used in this country. Use of hard fiber twine alone has amounted to about 200 million pounds annually.

We normally imported the bulk of hard-fibered manila and sisal from the Philippines and the Dutch East Indies. Those sources are entirely cut off for the duration. We are now depending on relatively small supplies of sisal produced in British East Africa--which must be shared with the United Kingdom and Russia. We are also getting small supplies of henequen and sisal from Mexico, Cuba and Haiti.

Our carryover supplies of the hard fibers are small, and must be used for only the most essential military and civilian uses. Agriculture can count on no new supplies of manila and sisal from the far East until after the war. Rope for agricultural uses will be made largely of jute, cotton and other substitute materials. Henequen may still be used to make binder twine, but must be combined with other materials, cotton in particular.

Counting the rope made from jute and cotton, a recent importation of henequen rope from Mexico, and the carryover of manila and sisal rope, plus 1943 manufacture, we will have about the 5 million pounds needed for agricultural uses this year. We can expect to have about 200 million pounds of binder twine needed this year, a substantial portion of which will be made of henequen with a cotton core.

Because supplies of hard fiber rope and twine are scarce and substitute materials must be used, there is need to inform farmers of the necessity to:

1. Conserve the rope and twine they now have, and new supplies.
2. Buy only the rope and twine they actually need.
3. Maintain binders and other equipment on which rope and twine is used in proper adjustment.
4. Use rope and twine made of cotton, jute and other substitute

materials wherever possible.

The Department has published Farmer's Bulletin No. 1931, "Care and Use of Rope on the Farm" which contains much useful information.

State agricultural engineers and county agents can give information about what measures can be taken to conserve rope and twine. However, here are a few simple rules that all farmers can follow:

Twine:

1. Twine is made from scarce material -- use it only on mechanical binding equipment.
2. Keep all points on binding machines through which the twine passes in the best possible operating condition. This means touching up or repairing worn needles and other eyes through which the twine passes, adjusting or replacing badly worn parts and weak or ineffective springs, keeping the cutter knife sharp, or replacing it if necessary. Such precautions are particularly pertinent when using twine made of substitute materials.
3. Tie larger bundles to use less twine.
4. Take care of present twine supplies -- don't leave it out in the weather, or subject it to destruction by rats, etc..

Rope:

1. Store it properly in a dry unheated building or room. It should be clean and dry before storing. Hang it in loose coils on a peg -- not on the floor.
2. Avoid kinks. Kinks pulled through a restricted space will shear the fibers and weaken the rope.
3. Don't leave rope where battery acid, drying oils, etc., can damage it, or where animals can chew it.
4. Splices are stronger, and easier, on rope than knots.
5. Don't overload rope. Use the right size for the job.
6. Reverse rope, end for end, that runs through pulleys and tackle to equalize the wear.
7. Save wear on rope by reducing wear and abrasion that occurs when one rope chafes another, when it drags over sharp surfaces, or picks up sand, grit, etc., when it is dragged over the ground.